LABOUR MONTHLY

EDITOR R. PALME DUTT

MY VIEW OF CRIMEA

THE EARL OF LYTTON, K.G.
THE VISCOUNT CASTLEREAGH, M.P.
QUINTIN HOGG, M.P.
HAMILTON KERR, M.P.
THE VISCOUNT HINCHINGBROOKE, M.P.
LT.-COL. SIR THOMAS MOORE, M.P.
LT.-COL. SIR GEORGE SCHUSTER, M.P.

THE BISHOP OF MONMOUTH
SIR GEOFFREY MANDER, M.P.
ALEXANDER SLOAN, M.P.
DR. HADEN GUEST, M.P.
J. D. MACK, M.P.
MALCOLM MACMILLAN, M.P.
D. N. PRITT, K.C., M.P.

ELECTION PROSPECTS
by R. P. D.

And Other Articles

6D

APRIL 1945

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LETTERS FROM ABROAD

In response to the Editorial Board's appeal in the January issue, letters and donations have been coming in from overseas . . . Palestine, Italy, India, Baghdad. . . .

"You will be interested in this—In a bookshop in Calcutta—in steps a poor Indian youth, barefoot, clad only in the loose cotton shirt-cum-drawers typical of the working people, lovingly fondling a much-battered number of L.M. I was told of copies so passed round that the print had been quite worn off."

"I should have liked to send you my 1944 copies for binding, but these have long since become too bedraggled. Every copy goes the round of my friends. I am therefore sending you the money which I would have paid for the binding."

"I have just read your request that readers shall, in 1945, see to it that the Fund Level shall be maintained, never to fluctuate unless in the right direction. My meagre pay prevents me from donating a larger sum than the enclosed P.O., but I hope it will serve to show that one of your readers abroad is fully aware of the fact that the appearance regularly of the Labour Monthly is vital to the interests of the British people."

"NEVER TO FLUCTUATE UNLESS IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION."

WILL ALL OUR READERS HELP US THIS MONTH?

WE NEED £100 PER MONTH.

Continued on page iii. of cover

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NOTES OF THE MONTH

Election Prospects

MR. CHURCHILL'S speech to the Conservative Conference has placed before public opinion the question of the coming general election and of the Government to follow the election. After ten years the rare opportunity of voting, that slender and infrequent foundation of the claim to democracy in this country, will be open to the adult civilian population and a proportion of the soldiers overseas. The parliament thus elected, and the Government to be formed on the basis of that parliament, will have the responsibility to finish the war, to make the peace, to share with our allies of the United Nations the shaping of world organisation, and to begin reconstruction in Britain. These are great responsibilities. They will require a parliament more closely representative of the outlook and aspirations of the people, both civilians and soldiers, than is the case at present. They will require a Government more truly representative of the nation, in tune with the great aims of the Crimea Agreement, responsive to the clamorous needs of British economic and social reconstruction, united, strong and stable. How can we best ensure this outcome?

Electors' Dilemmas

How can we best ensure that, within the conditions of the existing stage of the party system in this country, of the existing irrational electoral system and of the existing relations of parties, with half a dozen or more parties and groupings competing for single-member seats, the representatives and Government to be returned shall be best fitted for these great tasks and capable of leading a united nation for their fulfilment? It would be frivolous to pretend that the answer to this problem is easy. Only incurable Rip Van Winkles, who imagine that the political situation preceding 1939 can ever return and that the six years of war have been no more than a temporary interruption to be forgotten, can fail to see that these six years of war and victory over fascism have brought a new situation in the world and a new situation in Britain and that this new situation makes an imperative duty a fresh approach and review by every responsible political organisation and political leadership.

Mr. Churchill's Proposals

In his speech to the Conservative Conference Mr. Churchill has put forward his proposals for a future political alignment, even if he was still very sketchy in his approach to a programme. He indicated his expectation of the near approach of the end of the war in Europe ("should the war in Europe end before the summer ends—or even sooner, as it might well do") with the consequence of the dissolution of the coalition and the holding of a general election. After the departure of the Labour and Liberal Parties from the coalition, he would form the new temporary Government for the elections to draw in "not only Conservatives, but men of good will of any party or no party who are willing to serve," so as to "invest our administration with a national character." On this basis he would fight for a majority at the elections, that is, in fact, for a Tory majority, with minor unrepresentative trimmings, put forward as representing "a national character" in opposition to the Labour Party and other parties. In the event of winning his majority, he would "further re-form" his Government after the election "with the sole desire of rallying the strongest forces available to carry our cause to final victory and peace." This has been generally interpreted as an offer to the Labour and Liberal Parties to form anew the

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coalition National Government after the election, on the basis of a renewed Tory majority. What should be the attitude of the labour movement and progressive opinion to these proposals?

A Wartime Election

Undoubtedly the conditions of the election will be abnormal. The formal proclamation of the end of the war in Europe will not be the end of the war. Whether the act of surrender or formal declaration of the end of the war in Europe will come as soon as Mr. Churchill indicates, or whether the Nazi plans for prolonging resistance on the basis of Southern Germany and Transdanubia may not draw out the final phase longer than the British military experts at present appear to expect, will only be settled by the event. We cannot, however, forget that, according to the open admissions now of Government Ministers in explaining the housing fiasco, the Government and military authorities last autumn wrongly predicted the end of the war in Europe before the end of last year, and made strategic and organisational decisions on this basis which are now having to be paid for. Whatever the event, in fact the final liquidation of Nazism and military resistance and banditry in Germany will still be a military task, which may well extend over years ahead.

War and Post-War Unity

The war in the Pacific will still have to be carried to final victory. The decisions of the San Francisco Conference will have to be brought up for ratification. The most critical phase of the settlement of Germany and of the making of the peace will only be beginning. The foundations of international economic co-operation will have to be laid. All these tasks will require national unity of a strong and united Britain led by a strong and united Government whose mandate and representative character will be recognised by the entire country and not only by a section. Hence it would be dangerously unrealist for the labour movement and progressive opinion to dismiss idly and without consideration the need for a National Government in the transition years following victory in Europe. But this does not mean that we should therefore accept Mr. Churchill's proposal for a repetition of the present type of National Government on the basis of a Tory parliamentary majority and under Tory domination. Here is the heart of the problem.

Two Voices

As the poet wrote of Wordsworth:

"*Two voices are there. One is of the deep;*
The other of an old half-witted sheep"

It would be unjust to apply this to Mr. Churchill's speech to the Conservative Party Conference. But the lines spring irresistibly to mind in contemplating the marriage of Mr. Churchill and that Tory Conference of dowagers and Primrose League ladies screaming against any form of control. The contradiction of Mr. Churchill's dual role, on the one hand as the leader of national unity for victory over Hitler and on the other as leader of the Conservative Party, here found expression in a single speech. But this contradiction is more than the problem of an individual: it is an expression of the problem of the present political situation.

Playing to the Gallery

Mr. Churchill's speech to the Conservative Party Conference inevitably reflected this dual character. On the one hand, it was a Tory electioneering address, directed to the cheapest Tory gallery, or, to be more accurate, to the most expensive and vacuous Tory stalls and boxes. It contained all the familiar flings and tilts against Labour

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and the left wing, against nationalisation and for the speediest ending of all controls, denunciations of "totalitarianism" and "systems borrowed from foreign lands and alien minds," and even the exhumation of the war savings scare and menace of inflation, recalling the palmiest days of 1931, when Toryism won the election to save the gold standard, prior to going off it. Everything was there to win the enraptured applause of his Tory audience and calculated and designed to goad and provoke the peaceful Labour bull to fury in the hope of good sport in the electoral arena.

The Other Side

That was one side. But on the other hand, less conspicuously beneath the rhetorical trappings, but more visibly in the practical content, Mr. Churchill spoke as the national leader for victory over Hitler and Japan, and the joint architect of Crimea, conscious that in practice, after all the rhetoric, controls will have to be continued ("this does not mean that we are likely to run short of necessary controls") and recognising the necessity of national unity in the critical coming years. This part of his speech was less pleasing to the reactionary sections of his Tory audience, who had applauded the sentiments of Sir Herbert Williams welcoming the prospect of the end of the coalition as the ending of their "chains" (curiously echoing the almost identical sentiments and phrasing of Miss Barbara Betts at the Labour Party Conference last December), and had looked forward to a victory election with Churchill as their mascot to prelude a new lease of unrestricted Tory power.

Progressive National Unity

According to *The Times*, with reference to the reception of the proposal for a post-war coalition:—

Many right-wing Conservatives did not like the idea.—*The Times*, March 17.)

Similarly *The Observer*;—

His reference to a pre-election government "of a national character" was applauded, but his rather ambiguous phrase, which might have implied the possibility of a post-election all-party Government, including its electoral opponents, was received in silence. However, his biting attacks on the critics of the intellectual Left delighted the party.

—(*Observer*, March 18).

The reception by the wider body of public opinion which is not attracted to the ranks of Tory reaction is likely to be different in character. There is a wide and growing readiness to recognise the necessity of national unity in the crucial coming years, and full recognition of the sincerity and genuineness of Mr. Churchill's concern for it. But there is very much less readiness to accept as the price of national unity that it should continue to be saddled and burdened with the majority dominance of Tory reaction.

Toryism and Foreign Policy

How can the people of this country have confidence in a Tory majority to represent their outlook in the world family of democratic nations which is springing from the common victory over fascism, to carry forward the Crimea policy, to maintain friendship with the Soviet Union, to stamp out fascism in Europe, to side unfalteringly with the democratic anti-fascist liberation movements, to hold down Germany and not hark back to the old pro-German fostering of reaction? Can they forget that the Tory machine and the Tory majority in parliament only accepted the leadership of Churchill on sufferance and under compulsion, that they held him in the wilderness during the years of their Munichite vomit, that the majority of them voted for Chamberlain to the last, even when Churchill came to power, that a large proportion of them built up their Anglo-German Fellowship and applauded Hitler and

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Franco and Mussolini and Japan, and that even today in the critical division on Crimea twenty-two Tory M.Ps. (as against only one Labour M.P.) went into the lobby against the Government, while a large number, including the Chairman of the Party in parliament, conspicuously and deliberately abstained and withheld their support from the Government. If this is their record even under the pressure of war, what can be expected when the pressure of war is removed, when their reactionary wing may deem it safe to stage a Carlton Club conspiracy to throw aside their mascot Churchill as they threw aside Lloyd George after the last war, and when their pro-Vatican, pro-fascist, anti-Soviet and pro-German intriguers, with their dark and dubious foreign connections, may renew their manoeuvres? To trust the post-war foreign policy of this country once again to such a majority, as in the black years of the nineteen-thirties, would be to play with fire and to jeopardise the future of Britain.

Toryism and British Reconstruction

If this is true of foreign policy, how much more is it true of the no less urgent needs of British reconstruction and home development? Can the people forget the black record of the inter-war years, when under Tory leadership the controls were thrown aside and free play given to the increasing dominance of monopolies and combines, with the inevitable consequences of mass unemployment and idle plant, when the basic industries were allowed to fall into decay, the former thriving industrial areas became derelict areas and millions of acres passed out of cultivation? Once again the Tory Conference and the Tory press clamours for the ending of controls, that is, for freedom for big business to rob the people, throttle production, raise prices and place luxury before needs. Would the innocent elector seek to understand the meaning of "no controls"? Let him contemplate the spectacle of British India, where in the midst of famine the seventeen-course dinners were served to the Sahibs in the restaurants, while men, women and children starved and died in the gutters beneath the windows of the diners in the restaurants—there is the paradise of "no controls," the Eldorado of Anglo-Indian reaction, which is the heart and core of Tory Diehardism.

Who Plans? Who Pays?

Late in the day, years and years after the Socialists and Communists have been exposing the destruction of British industry and agriculture under the monopolist stranglehold and Tory rule, and the necessity of a basic renovation and re-equipment which is beyond the scope of the ossified finance-capitalist structure that has developed in Britain, at long last, under the overmastering pressure of threatened American competition, the progressive Tory minority, the younger Tories, the Tory Reformers have just awoken to the necessity of the re-equipment of British industry. They have produced plans showing the necessity of the expenditure of eight thousand million pounds on the re-equipment of British industry. From where? Under whose control? The answer falters. Is there the slightest possibility of the provision of such capital sums within the existing limits, controls and conditions? The City, to show its independent ability to meet all needs, proudly gives birth to its two Development Corporations, with a maximum capacity to provide one hundred and seventy million pounds of capital for all purposes of industrial reconstruction. The railways, with the highest fares and freights in the world, with crying need of modernisation, announce their intention to raise fares and freights still further as solution of their problem.

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The steel cartel, having rigidly kept steel production below the pre-war level right through the years of the war, prepare to tighten their monopoly for after the war. The coalowners produce their Foot Plan amid universal derision. There is no road here. The Britain of the nineteen-thirties would appear a golden age, if the post-war Britain of free monopoly, as advocated by the lords of the *Daily Express*, were allowed to run its unchecked course of ruin.

Public Control—Public Benefit

Yes: there is undoubtedly need of gigantic planned capital expenditure for the re-equipment of British industry, to raise the level of productivity, to end the backwardness and to extend the basis for rising social standards. But every serious expert and responsible authority understands that the task is so vast as to be beyond the capacity of existing private enterprise or the normal profit-making calculations of existing monopoly and that it can only be carried out by the full strength of social organisation, through the action and financing of the State, under its planning and control. But public money must carry with it public control. The people of this country will not provide the vast capital required in order to line the pockets of a handful of profiteers and private interests. They will demand and rightly demand, that such investment of public money must carry with it public control of its expenditure and public enjoyment of the fruits to be won through the raising of social standards. Such a policy of expansion, which is bound up with the Crimea policy of international economic co-operation, will require a different impetus in public life, and a different political majority in parliament, built around the labour movement of this country, as the necessary basis for the post-war Government. It is not compatible with the maintenance of the existing Tory majority.

For a Labour and Progressive Majority

To end the present Tory majority in parliament and return a Labour and progressive majority is thus the main task of the coming election. That is why it is so important to establish a Labour and progressive electoral alliance (Labour, Communist, Common Wealth, Liberals, with possible other groups or some Independents) so as to ensure that in no case shall a split vote let in a candidate of Tory reaction. This is a necessary mechanism of the election, rendered obligatory by the present electoral system, if the result is not to be in grave danger of falsifying the wishes of the electors. The opponents of such an alliance offer imaginary difficulties of programme; when, in fact, a common programme could easily be reached, on the basis of the immediate measures which are today supported by all progressive opinion. The truth of this could most simply be ascertained by opening up negotiations to explore the ground. Refusal of negotiations suggests fear that the opening up of negotiations would reveal that there is no obstacle to agreement. Alternatively, they blame the existence of other organisations as responsible for any splitting of the vote. This is both unrealist and undemocratic; since the other organisations exist and have a democratic right to contest the election. In the case of the Communist Party it is an especially unreasonable argument, since the offer of the Communist Party to affiliate to the Labour Party has been refused. Alternatively, they declare that the Labour Party will win a majority anyway, even though the vote is split. This can only be characterised as a frivolous approach to a serious contest. The arguments against an alliance will not bear examination. Above all, the alternative, in the absence of such an electoral agreement, of the undoubted possibility of a Tory parliamentary majority on the basis of a minority vote, is never frankly faced.

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Whitsun Conference Ban

The refusal so far of the majority of the Labour Party leadership to consider an electoral alliance has now been followed up by a ban on the discussion of the issue at the coming Whitsun Conference, even though it is known that organisations representing an important proportion of the Labour Party membership have sent in resolutions in support—resolutions which are not printed on the agenda. This undemocratic procedure can only suggest fear of the result of the discussion of the issue, if it were allowed to be presented to the membership. The formal ground on which this ban is imposed, that the issue is declared to have been already discussed and decided at the December Conference and thus comes under the three years rule, is not tenable; since the resolutions on the same issue for the December Conference were also not allowed to be presented. No resolution on this issue has yet been presented, discussed or voted on at a Labour Party Conference. The present resistance of official Labour policy to an electoral alliance, in face of the critical character of the coming election, can only be regarded as either suicidal folly or deliberate sectional defeatism. A serious fight for a majority would place in the forefront the importance of winning allies (Toryism understands this very well, as the Churchill speech has shown, however weak and insignificant the allies available; Labour, with all the cards in its hands, throws them away). The alternative policy inevitably suggests a complacent readiness to accept a minority position; and would fit in with those suggestions from certain right wing quarters, which have hinted at the necessity of a National Government after the election, but see it in terms of a repetition of the present type of National Government, with Labour in a minority position. The answer to this type of right-wing policy does not lie in sterile resolutions against any form of future coalition, but in a determined fight to establish a Labour and progressive alliance so as to win a Labour and progressive majority, and then on this basis to build up national unity and a National Government in which the Labour and progressive forces would represent the majority position.

Beyond the Election

It would be futile to attempt to predict the outcome of the approaching election, in advance of the situation or the issues on the basis of which it will be called and with many still unmeasured factors of a largely new electorate and the uncharted consequences of ten years of political change and experience. In so far as the composition of the Government to follow the election will necessarily depend on the outcome of the election, it would be no less out of place to attempt to lay down beforehand in any detail the character and composition of the future Government, But certain principles which should guide our approach are already clear, and follow from the whole character of the future period of the fulfilment of the Crimea decisions, of the completion of victory and shaping of peace, no less than from the needs of the situation in Britain. We need to win a parliament that shall be more truly representative of the people and of the needs of the coming era; that is, we need to end the present Tory majority and to win a Labour and progressive majority. On the basis of such a majority we need to seek to establish the broadest-based Government of national unity, drawing in all parties and sections accepting the Crimea decisions, the necessary policies of international economic co-operation and an agreed minimum basis of social and economic measures of progress for reconstruction in Britain.

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Stability and Unity

In the event of the absence of a decisive majority arising from the election, the need for such a National Government would become obvious. But also if a strong Labour and progressive majority, such as must be our aim, were secured, it would still be wise policy on the part of the leaders of that majority to invite the co-operation of the representatives of other parties and sections in a broad National Government, in order to ensure that the crucial decisions which will have to be taken during these next few years for the completion of the war, for the settlement of Germany, for the destruction of fascism, for building the peace, for acceptance of the obligations of international co-operation, no less than for the first steps of reconstruction in Britain, shall be assured of the united support of the entire nation, and shall not be subject to the precarious chances of parliamentary vicissitudes or temporary party changes. The national unity which has been indispensable during these years for the military defeat of fascism will be no less essential to complete its destruction and to win the peace; but the forms of that national unity will have to be carried forward to correspond to the new needs of the situation and the new outlook of the people.

Lesson of the Crimea Debate

How necessary such unity is for the fulfilment of the Crimea decisions, and for the effective realisation of the great hopes which they bring, has been shown by the Crimea debate in parliament. There could be no graver mistake than to under-estimate the extent and danger of the manifold opposition to Crimea of those reactionary forces which covertly or openly seek to undermine the decisions reached, to rebuild reaction and fascism in Europe, to restore German power, to kindle hostility to the Soviet Union or to the United States, to sabotage international co-operation and break down the economic controls and to return to the pre-war world. That reaction is rooted in powerful sections inside the Tory Party, as shown not only by those who voted for the opposition amendment, but by the others who spoke against without voting and by the many more who abstained without openly expressing their opinions. But that reaction is also assisted by the equivocal role of influential sections within the Labour Party, as shown in the speech of Greenwood or the line of the *Daily Herald* or the propaganda of an Ivor Thomas, a Stokes or a Michael Foot and also within the Liberal Party, as shown by the speech of Sir William Beveridge or the subsequent attacks by Beveridge and Layton against the Dumbarton Oaks plan.

Co-operation for Crimea

None of these oppositions represents any serious basis of mass support. But each is influentially enough placed within each party machine, so that, in the event of the formation of an isolated Government of one or another party such an influential minority might seriously deflect policy, in a moment of parliamentary manoeuvring by the opposition. Only the firm united stand of the majority supporters of Crimea in all the principal parties completely overwhelms these sectional opposition tendencies, as was triumphantly shown in the final vote of 413 to 0, which registered national unity in support of Crimea. Hence, if we are seriously concerned for the fulfilment of the Crimea decisions, we must strive for the co-operation of all those who support them in ensuring their fulfilment. It is with this aim in view, transcending any separate party aim, that we welcome the contributions of representatives of widely varying political outlooks, in common support of Crimea, which we print this month in our journal.

R. P. D.

21 *March*, 1945.

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Postscript

Mr. Brailsford Again

Mr. Brailsford has written a reply to the criticism by the Soviet writer, Ilya Ehrenburg, directed against his book, *Our Settlement with Germany*, under the title "Mr. Brailsford, Devil's Advocate," and reprinted in our February issue. We print this communication on a later page; a copy has been forwarded to Ilya Ehrenburg in case he has time and wishes to answer it. One or two comments may not be out of place, in view of certain misconceptions which are revealed. Mr. Brailsford complains of the sharpness of the criticism and alleges that such sharp criticism is the cause of the barriers between Communists and those of his school of socialist thought. He is mistaken. The issue of the treatment of Germany is not an issue of difference between Communists and Socialists. The World Trade Union Conference, representing sixty million organised workers of every school of political thought, has registered the unanimity of Communists, Socialists, non-political trade unionists, Catholic workers and every section of the organised working-class, in demanding "inflexible determination" in the execution of the stern measures determined by the Crimea Conference in respect of Germany and in condemning the suicidal leniency for which Mr. Brailsford's book is a plea. The Crimea Conference has registered the verdict of the entire civilised world. The execution of this verdict is a life and death question for the working-class and for democracy, no less than for the ultimate future of the German people. The camp of those who seek to weaken the execution of that verdict is no camp of socialism; it is the camp of Goebbels, of Franco, of the Vatican, of the pro-fascists.

For Whose Benefit?

In vain Mr. Brailsford seeks to claim that he is pleading the cause of the German people and not of the Nazi gangsters. Every plea for leniency against the policy of the Crimea decisions, in the name of supposedly "humanitarian" or "economic" considerations, means in practice assistance to the maintenance and revival of the strength of Nazism and reaction in Germany. But the plea is not even tenable in fact. When Mr. Brailsford urges a comfortable exile for Hitler and his fellow gangsters; when he seeks to palliate the worst crimes of the Nazi gangsters by the amazing plea that they have been "correct" in their dealings with the Western peoples (shades of Oradour and Breedendonck!) and have only "flung away all restraint and exterminated hundreds of thousands" in dealing with Soviet people, with Slavs and Jews and those they judged "sub-human," because they conceived it their "duty," he must not be surprised if such pleading arouses the horror of all decent people.

A Libellous Record

In vain Mr. Brailsford appeals to his record as an opponent of fascism. He would do better not to appeal to his record. His vituperation in denouncing the Moscow Trials, when the Soviet Union purged the Fifth Column and built that impregnable strength which has shattered the Nazi armies, is too fresh in memory. In the hour of testing of every serious anti-fascist, in the winter of 1939-40, when Chamberlain was pouring out his tanks and his planes and preparing to send his expeditionary armies in support of Mannerheim and Finnish fascism against the Soviet Union, on which side was

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Brailsford? He was in full cry with the pack in denouncing the Soviet Union and Stalin: "His Russia is a totalitarian State like another, as brutal towards the rights of others, as careless of its plighted word . . . corruption . . . despotism . . . intellectual degradation . . . Stalin has now ranked himself with Hitler," etc., etc. (H. N. Brailsford in *Reynolds News*, December 3, 1939). Mr. Brailsford has a very delicate sense to deprecate sharp and uncomradely language. Criticism of himself he condemns as "calumny," "malice" and "slander." But to the indecencies of his own tongue, when dealing with those who have really fought for and served socialism, he sets no limits. We do not know if he is proud of this record. Mr. Brailsford sneers at Ehrenburg as "a neutral in 1940." Ehrenburg was never a neutral in the fight against fascism. Ehrenburg in 1940 was heart and soul with those who stormed the Mannerheim Line, and thereby paved the way for victory over fascism; he was heart and soul with the French Communist anti-fascist fighters at a time when Daladier and Mr. Brailsford's friends in France were casting them in prison and passing the Death Decree against them, placing Petain and Weygand in command of France's military forces and thus preparing the surrender of France to fascism.

Fascism Shall Not Escape

No. The meting out of justice to Germany, the extermination of fascism, is no question of party polemic. It is the common task of civilised mankind. The verdict has been registered in the Crimea decisions. That verdict will be executed. All the pleadings and apologias for the fascist gangsters will not avail; for behind those pleadings and those apologias, whatever the intentions of their writers, is the death-mask of fascism seeking once again to stir to life and overrun the world anew. The working-class and the progressive peoples of the world must hold firm their unity to destroy the monster once and for all. This task of destruction is the first condition for building a new world. R.P.D.

The Editor of LABOUR MONTHLY will be very glad to receive contributions in the form of finished articles or of suggestions and data for articles. The customary proviso must be made that no responsibility is undertaken for manuscripts sent to him nor can he promise to enter into correspondence regarding contributions not accepted.

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The Crimea Conference

(The vote in the House of Commons on March 1 (413 to 0) demonstrated the unity of the nation in support of the Crimea Conference decisions. In view of the importance of these decisions and the need to develop the widest informed public opinion in their support, the LABOUR MONTHLY *has organised, on a very broad front, this symposium of views on the significance of Crimea.*—ED. L.M.)

I.

by THE EARL OF LYTTON, K.G.

I CONSIDER the Report of the Crimea Conference was immensely important and encouraging for the following reasons:—

1. Because of the approval given by the three Powers there represented to the Dumbarton Oaks proposals.

2. Because of the decision to summon a Conference of all the United Nations at San Francisco on April 25 to discuss these proposals.

3. Because of the concluding words of the Report, which state that "victory in this war and the establishment of the proposed International Organisation will provide the greatest opportunity in all history to create in the years to come the essential conditions of such a peace" as was envisaged in the Atlantic Charter.

As to "the general prospects for international co-operation and democratic advance on the basis of the Crimea decisions," I do not believe that any Covenant or Charter is of value unless the will to implement it exists, or any International Organisation unless there is a will to use it for the general welfare of mankind.

It is important, therefore, that every effort should be made to make the people of this country understand that the new International Organisation, whatever its final constitution, is but an instrument which cannot function independently of the States which compose it; what they are committed to by joining it; and what their Government in the future must do, or refrain from doing, if this instrument is to be effectively used for the preservation of international peace and the prevention of aggression.

II.

by THE BISHOP OF MONMOUTH

ANGLICANS do not like their Bishops to meddle in party politics, nor do they allow any Bishop to speak for the whole Church. But the Crimea Conference is not a party question; rather, it affects the whole of mankind and an Anglican Bishop may be allowed to express his own personal opinion about its decisions. I believe it was a milestone in the upward path of mankind to a fuller and fairer life on earth. What was done at Yalta will affect the happiness of hundreds of millions of human beings.

I whole-heartedly commend its decisions because they are not a moral compromise; rather they are based on sound Christian principles which will bear the closest scrutiny. These principles may be stated briefly: Impartiality is required where goods and territories are concerned. The four freedoms must be secured for individuals and for sovereign states. And peace in the world must be maintained by moral, mental and physical force. Had there been a halting compromise on any of these principles then another war, in the not distant

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future, is a certainty. But there was no compromise, not even in regard to Poland.

The Allies, when establishing the Polish State in 1919, proposed the Curzon line as being fair to Poland and to Russia and to the inhabitants of the disputed territory. This was done after prolonged and careful investigation and in days of peace when Russia was out of favour with the Allies. That Poland did not agree cannot alter the fact that for a quarter of a century British statesmen have consistently maintained that the Poles are not morally entitled to the territory they afterwards seized. The Curzon line is the fairest and most practicable frontier that impartiality can devise.

Furthermore, America, Britain and Russia have guaranteed the independence of Poland with freedom to elect its own government. But there are two important reservations: Poland must be friendly to Russia and it must be a democratic and not a fascist or semi-fascist government. We heartily agree.

Anti-Russian propaganda should cease once and for all in allied countries. It is largely based on prejudice and ignorance and it is altogether pernicious. Let us substitute truth and trust for half-truths and hatred. Marshal Stalin has confounded friend and foe alike by the moderation he has shown to Finland and Rumania and by his self-restraint when the trouble in Greece was at its height. He has crowned this by his wholehearted co-operation with Mr. Churchill and with Mr. Roosevelt at Yalta. All three statesmen showed themselves to be internationally-minded. They are humanitarians at heart. Let their critics realise that the wounds of war can only be healed by peace-loving statesmen who set the common before the sectional interest and who sweeten and harmonise the inevitable contrarieties and antagonisms of life, by remaining steadily conscious of its major and reconciling interests. The Crimea Conference is a bright light in a dark world. Let us follow that light and it will guide the nations into the ways of peace.

III.

by THE VISCOUNT CASTLEREAGH, M.P.

AT the Crimea Conference the final touches were added to the blueprint for the total elimination of Germany as a military power. Meanwhile, at San Francisco the United Nations will set to work to lay a foundation for lasting peace. The most impressive feature of the Yalta Agreement was the unity among the big three, not only in war aims but in their peace aims and in their fixed determination that this time world-peace must become a reality.

The old League was doomed from the start. U.S.A. withdrew into splendid isolation and the new Russian State was outlawed. In the new conception these two great countries are to play an equal role with Britain. Ideology is no bar. The Soviet Union is a group of socialist republics; the U.S.A. is essentially capitalist.

The greatest barrier to international co-operation and the indirect cause of this war was the cold-shouldering of Russia after the last one. Such was the fear of the Bolshevik bogey that the advance of the fascist dictators was not checked by the short-sighted democracies. The earlier meddling into the internal affairs of other nations by the Comintern blinded the nations to the real danger of fascism. If a state enjoys true democratic government no amount of outside interference can possibly disturb it, but fascism in every case has led to war. Italy, Japan, Spain and finally Ger-

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many. Fascism must, therefore, be eliminated. At home those who used to admire the Nazis must never have a say in the counsels of the nation; abroad, General Franco must be removed at the earliest possible moment and the repressed people of Spain permitted to choose their Government by free election.

The measure of unity at Yalta was remarkable. U.S.S.R. has suffered more, U.S.A. less than the other nations. Britain occupies a centre position. She had, therefore, to hold a balance between the ideology of the West and the realism of the East. The Polish settlement was essentially a compromise. The House of Commons, barring a handful whose hatred of Russia far exceeds their love of Poland, has endorsed the fairness of the deal, though it admits it entails a measure of sacrifice. The London Poles are bitterly complaining that they have not received 100 per cent. of their claims. It is the obvious duty of all Poles outside the Lublin Committee to accept the terms and join in the task of forming a Provisional Government.

Then will follow the acid test of the agreement—the holding of elections in a free and unfettered manner.

The Soviet conception of democracy concedes the greater equality; ours the greater liberty. Now we expect to see truly democratic elections being held in liberated and, indeed, any country who wants them and an international commission holding the ring to ensure a fair start to the era of peace.

The House of Commons by its recent vote not only endorsed the decisions of Yalta, it recorded a vote of confidence in Marshal Stalin's good faith. So long as the unity of the Big Three is maintained, so long is the barometer of democracy set fair.

IV.

by Dr. HADEN GUEST, M.P.

THE decisions agreed at the Crimea Conference mark the beginning of a new stage of world political development. The decisions are founded on the imperative necessity to achieve the defeat of German militarism and Nazism. Agreement has been reached on the measures to be adopted to control Germany after defeat. And agreement has been reached on the questions of Poland and Yugoslavia, which has cleared the decks for action in liberated Europe.

The report lays down in clear cut and unambiguous terms that the establishment of order in Europe and the rebuilding of national economic life must be achieved by means "which will enable the liberated peoples to destroy the last vestiges of Nazism and Fascism and create democratic institutions of their own choice."

The next stage is the calling of a world congress of the United Nations at San Francisco on April 25, 1945, to agree on the charter of a world organisation. This organisation is to maintain peace and security, to prevent aggression and "to remove the political, economic and social causes of war" by the close co-operation of all peace-loving peoples.

The outlines of this Charter are to be found in the "Dumbarton Oaks Conventions on World Organisation" held from August 21 to October 7, 1944.*

The power to achieve this great end of the creation of a world organisation armed with military power exists now. It will have an international court of justice and an economic and social council to deal with world affairs on

* Cmd. 6560 Stationary Office, 2d. net.

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international, economic, social and other humanitarian matters, as parts of its organisation.

The power that is now achieving victory over Germany by British, American and Soviet armed forces is great enough even for this world task. The plan of the Charter of World Organisation drawn up at Dumbarton Oaks is comprehensive enough to include the world as a whole. The Conference at San Francisco will set up a world organisation greater in power than the League of Nations and different in character. The organisation of an assembly with general powers and a security council for action, if required, beyond those powers, equips the world organisation with strength and vitality.

Such bodies as the I.L.O., the International Health Organisation of the League of Nations, the World Congress of Trade Unions and the International (Hot Springs) Food Organisation will fall naturally into place in relation to the International Economic and Social Council.

This historic achievement of world statesmanship is only possible because of the intimate co-operation of Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union. By this achievement the world is changed and a new stage of civilisation begins. All progressive parties in the world will need to reconsider their own programmes and to reconsider their relations with other parties. There opens before the world the possibility of all the giant energies of mankind and all the vast resources of the earth being used to build a world civilisation. All nations can make their contribution and the lead is taken by the U.S.S.R. and Communism, the British Commonwealth and democracy, the United States and its traditions of republican freedom. The great question for Great Britain to decide is how can all progressive forces unite to help in the building of this world civilisation.

V.

by THE VISCOUNT HINCHINGBROOKE, M.P.

THE decisions reached at Yalta transcend those of any previous international conference ever held. Their importance for the future peace of the world is far reaching. The great allies are pledged to carry the meaning of their victories into interlocking political and military relationships at San Francisco. They are pledged to set up there a system for associating in intimate and continuing converse the great and small nations of the world; a system for the ventilation of problems afflicting mankind, for the expression of constructive proposals for human betterment and for the provision of military and legal machinery to suppress or deter the law-breaker.

The Dumbarton Oaks propositions now to be finalised at San Francisco go far beyond what was attempted at Versailles. It was then hoped that a collection of nations whose representatives met only at intervals would so harmonise their policies as to exclude the possibility of war at any time recurring. It became known in twenty years that the nature of man and of States was such that the simple apparatus of consultation was woefully inadequate for the task. Now the stage is set to devise something far more lasting and comprehensive. I firmly believe that the fighting generation in every land is determined to outlaw war and that these men are even more confident than were their fathers "that all the nations of the world, for spiritual as well as realistic reasons, must come to the abandonment of the use of force," for they

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have both the example of the faith and the example of the failure of a former generation to guide them.

There is some danger that at San Francisco the substance of common action with regard to urgent European problems will be lost and the shadow of procedure, formulary and representation be pursued. The nations' delegates must keep their feet firmly on the ground.

No one should think that the realities of international co-operation will not be tested until some new aggressor is ready to pounce upon the civilised world, or that it is sufficient at San Francisco merely to create the elaborate machinery for joint military action and then to wait for it to be called into play. From the very moment that Germany is occupied the test of co-operation will be applied. If the Commission of Control in Berlin fails to secure a uniform system of treatment of Germans in the separate sectors of occupation, then schism will have entered international councils and may have far reaching effects. It is therefore of the greatest importance that the machinery of control and reorganisation in Germany should be an integral part of the general mechanism set up at San Francsico and be of sufficient strength to withstand the stresses to which it will be subjected. Not only must all the peace-loving States be associated with the policies to be pursued in Germany, but those policies must be applied uniformly throughout the country.

The only sure road to world peace is by the limitation of national sovereignty under proper safeguards. Defeated Germany offers an opportunity never before presented for a great experiment in international government. If the Powers can agree upon a common solution to the social and economic problems that will arise in Germany, if they can cross-connect their military forces and all the complex apparatus of control, then, to the extent of one country in the world, at any rate, the rivalry of nationhood will not prevail, and some advance will have been made towards an international society in which freedom from the greatest of all fears has been obtained.

VI.

by SIR GEOFFREY MANDER, M.P.

THE Crimea has been associated in the minds of the British people so far with an unhappy and quite unnecessary war waged in the middle of the last century, redeemed only by the splendid nursing reforms instigated by "The Lady with the Lamp" —Florence Nightingale. This attractive area of the earth's surface, forming a sort of riviera on the Black Sea, ought now to carry a much happier meaning to the minds of the British, and, indeed, all other peoples, so long as history is written. It cannot be too often repeated that the whole future of the world depends upon the understanding, goodwill and friendly co-operation between the three Great Powers—Great Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union—inside, of course, a world organisation of all peace loving States.

Enormous impetus to the work done at Dumbarton Oaks and to be done at San Francisco has been given by the decisions reached at Yalta. So far as this country is concerned, in the House of Commons no hostile vote was given. It is a happy circumstance that the personal relations between the three great leaders, Mr. Churchill, President Roosevelt and Marshal Stalin, are so close and on such a human basis. It is essential, however,

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that not only the leaders, but the peoples themselves, should take every possible step to develop their own personal relationships and to appreciate each other. There is much to be done, prejudices, suspicions and misunderstandings to be cleared away, but I firmly believe that these three great nations, who between them possess the major sources of force in the world, are travelling on the same road towards the dawn. In spite of their differences in method, in constitution, in history, they are all genuinely anxious to promote and maintain world peace and to take part in the onward and upward march of mankind.

As soon as the war is over, the efforts which the Germans are already making to sow dissension among the Allies will be greatly intensified, and we must be on our guard against insidious attempts to exploit the tolerance and generosity of the British people. They will seize every opportunity to exaggerate the natural differences that are bound to arise, to fan the fires of political and religious prejudices in order to prevent the Crimea decisions being carried out in practice. If they succeed we shall have lost the war and a fresh struggle under still more difficult conditions will arise for the next generation.

The one good thing of the V-bombs is that they have killed the isolationist movement in all countries.

It is my hope that all parties in this country, so far as foreign policy is concerned, will be united; that they will support wholeheartedly a new League of Nations backed by force to carry out its decisions, competing only in their desire to make ever more effective the necessary machinery and the reality of its popular support. We cannot expect to attain all at once an earthly paradise or a world parliament; the compulsory settlement of all disputes, justiciable or non-justiciable between great and small powers alike must be our objective and joint military action in the form of an international police force directly under the orders of the world organisation. I do not believe this is immediately possible, but we can set up now a working arrangement which will, in effect, produce the same results if the comradeship and co-operation of the United Nations in war can be maintained in peace. I am sure it ought to be, I am sure it can be, and it is the duty of the peoples of the world, above all, of our own great nation, to play their part in this to the full.

VII.

by QUINTIN HOGG, M.P.

FROM the Crimea debate emerges a conception of British foreign policy which should command the support of responsible opinion in all parties. This policy is based on four principles.

(1) There will assuredly be another war if the present partnership between the three Great Powers is permitted to dissolve. To maintain this partnership neither pious aspirations nor ordinary diplomatic usage can suffice. There must be regular and frequent consultations both between the Foreign Secretaries and between Prime Minister, President and Marshal. The credit for taking the initiative in these matters in the past largely lies with this country: on us, therefore, will rest a peculiar responsibility for seeing that the consultations are continued.

(2) There will assuredly be another war if either Germany or Japan is permitted to re-emerge as a great power. This, as the Foreign Secretary said last autumn, is the "key" of our foreign

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policy. This object can not be obtained at one blow by a satisfactory peace treaty. It is very largely technical and involves continued co-operation for many years and consultation by the experts of the several Governments. Our special contribution will be to keep in harmony the realism of Russia and the idealism of the U.S.A.

(3) The co-operation of the Great Three is to be used for the purpose of maintaining the rights of small nations and not for suppressing them. Britain, as the smallest of the great powers, is also the greatest of the small powers and must constantly remember that smaller nations suffering from a sense of injustice can often succeed in provoking a quarrel between the great. Continued partnership between the great can only be maintained with the proposed new framework of collective security guaranteeing the rights of the small.

(4) Britain has her own distinctive part to play in the scheme of things, as a European country, as the senior member of the Commonwealth, as the administrator of colonial territories. A weak or divided Britain will mean a breakdown of peace, as it has done in the past. This means that the false antithesis between patriotism and collective security must be broken down. Patriotism demands collective security —and collective security can only be realised if heavy demands are made on patriotism. Only on the basis of a strong and healthy nation, well armed, but armed in defence of the three principles enumerated above, can peace be preserved.

VIII.

by HAMILTON KERR, M.P.

THE Yalta agreement offers the surest hope of peace to an exhausted and distracted world. If the British Commonwealth, the United States and the Soviet Union continue to work together in the spirit of the Crimean Conference, then settled conditions will return, not only to Europe, but likewise to the Middle East and Far East; for the Agreement sends a message of reassurance to the furthest part of the globe.

It has now become a commonplace that the failure of the first League of Nations derived from the permanent absence of the United States and from the absence of Russia in the first years after the German defeat.

The invasion of Manchukuo, Abyssinia and the Rhineland found the League, haunted by a sense of its own weakness, either unable or unwilling to proceed to the extreme limits against the aggressors; for the Sheriff's posse did not feel itself strong enough to storm the bandits' lair.

Let us therefore briefly examine the main advantages arising from the Agreement in the three main areas of the world. Take Europe first. It was the well-calculated policy of Bismarck, a master of diplomacy, to divide Russia from Great Britain. Had not the combination overthrown Napoleon, and had not the wealth of Russia —its domed cities, its wheatfields, its buried minerals, its endless steppes, tempted the lust and adventure of the west ever since the days of the Teutonic Knights?

Great Britain and Russia divided, it was always possible to daunt one or the other with a hostile combination. And in the meantime Germany profited. Endowed with a central position, easy communications, an industrious and docile population, she could strike east or west as circumstance or opportunity demanded. An Anglo-Russian combination could alone upset this scheme and the spectre of a war on two fronts con-

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tinually haunted the imagination of the German General Staff.

Turn now to the Middle East, an area of great oilfields, of air, land and sea communications, of turbulent national hatreds, a veritable Pandora's box to the trouble seeker. Only the agreement and working partnership of the three great powers can enforce peace. And need one add that Japan can never again commit her infamies in the Pacific if confronted with Anglo-American naval power and the land army of Russia?

Nor is the adhesion of the United Nations to the decisions of Europe any less important. The harsh lessons of war and the admirable writings of Mr. Lippmann have convinced most thinking Americans that the United States cannot concern herself solely with the Pacific. If Japanese naval power prompted her vigilance, so likewise must she always fight to prevent the control of the Atlantic by a hostile navy. The Monroe doctrine only became effective because Britain controlled the seas after Trafalgar. And today, with the development of the submarine, the aeroplane, the flying bomb and the rocket, America is realising that the European and African coasts form her first line of defence.

If military science is able, within the space of twenty years, to submit the capital city of Washington, the forges of Pittsburg and the assembly lines of Detroit to continuous and merciless bombardment, then Americans must likewise look to Yalta as a guarantee of their own security.

IX.

by J. D. MACK, M.P.

THE true significance of the recent Crimea Conference decisions can only be borne in mind when one appreciates the general set-up of the United Nations and their approach to the problem of dealing with post-war Germany. San Francisco on April 25 should mark a definite advance upon the remarkable measure of agreement reached at Yalta; but it would be unwise to deduce therefrom that all the United Nations are at one upon the immediate post-war problems.

Undoubtedly Poland has been the greatest bone of contention. In the Labour Party itself there are elements, including not only Catholic members, who have shown some dissatisfaction. Mr. Greenwood unfortunately lent support to these elements who were demanding "a strong line" on Russia's just and righteous demands.

In this country there is at present the Polish Council of Democratic Unity which supports the Provisional Government set up in Lublin; and this is rapidly gaining for itself a great deal of support amongst the rank and file of labour opinion. The Government should give equal recognition as a first measure to this body of Polish opinion, which is opposed to the London Polish Government, made up of disintegrated and totally unrepresentative elements. Yet Mr. Eden, in his speech on March 1 in the House of Commons, said that the British Government would for the time being continue to recognise the Polish Government in London.

The Labour Party can only hope to win popular support of the British public in the forthcoming election if it takes a strong, unequivocal line in its support for our outstanding Allies linked with us in this Crimea Conference.

Russia's attitude is not aggressive. She has shown the utmost consideration for the small nationalities. She has been exceedingly magnanimous and restrained in her treatment of those

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former Axis satellites now subdued. Her policy is not the wanton destruction of Germany, but the total defeat of the Hitler regime, thus opening to the German people an opportunity to win their democratic and rightful place in the future world.

Mr. Churchill, despite his political record extending over many years of anti-Soviet discrimination, nevertheless showed a realism and understanding of the facts, and to that extent received the support of the House of Commons. We must never make the mistake in future of alienating the firm relationship of friendship between this country and the U.S.S.R.

Finally, at San Francisco, given good will and on all sides a true desire for peace, great progress should be made.

X.

by MALCOLM MACMILLAN, M.P.

IMPORTANT as Yalta is as the dawn of wider political concord, the international economic implications are at least equally impressive and hopeful.

Indeed, the very pursuit of the common political aims and intentions of Yalta inevitably brings the Powers on to the broader highway of economic consultation and co-ordination of economic policies. If the political policy on which agreement has been attained is to be adhered to—and it seems that events for the next few years will compel this—it will certainly not be possible to avoid economic co-operation in many fields.

Consultation and co-operation in restoring the economic structure of Nazi-exploited Europe—and of Germany itself—is inevitable as well as desirable. None of the assenting powers can be left out of such a tremendous co-ordinated effort. Other nations will also become more involved in this single economic object of reconstruction. From singleness of heart and purpose will develop compromise on matters of present conflict; more concrete alliance where anything less than combined total effort is insufficient; adaptation of their differing characteristic methods to a co-ordinated and unified new technique called for by the immense new problem.

Exchange of information and the pooling of resources and ideas for these great economic and political tasks ahead will underline continuously the fundamental community of interests.

Prosperity is indivisible. The prosperity or economic failure of nation A is an inescapable influence on that of nation B. Just as in each country during war, the war effort is for combined total war against the aggressors; so in the peace the recovery from war's destruction and its aftermath must be a shared and unified and total task, with responsibility in the economic as well as in the political fields.

This single economic unit of the world can not suffer any diseased member and remain unaffected as a whole. The welfare of each is an urgency of enlightened self-interest for all; and without the economic welfare of all none can hope to remain aloof and unaffected by deterioration of the world of which it is a part.

The folly and ravages of war have taught us the necessity for political co-operation. The logic of events in the field of common political action and endeavour will lead the powers and ultimately all into the international planned economy of the Socialist. Deviation from that path of logic is the path to world war III.

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XI.

by Lieut.-Col. SIR THOMAS MOORE, C.B.E., M.P.

THE word historical has been often abused, but few will deny the claims of the Crimea Report to its adoption.

There are two reasons:

Firstly, it is probably the last Conference of the Leaders of the three victorious nations that will take place before the defeat of Germany.

Secondly, in the Report are stated clearly and categorically the terms for Germany and at a time when the United Nations are in a position to implement them.

There are many good phrases in the Report reminiscent of its part author, no doubt (the British Prime Minister) but there is one that to me is of vital significance—"in harmony."

The Leaders of Britain, the U.S.A. and Russia will, "in harmony," take all necessary measures, not alone to ensure victory, since, indeed, that is already assured, but to rebuild a world in which the rules of law, justice and freedom must prevail.

If that harmony were to cease—a hope which our enemies still cherish—then, indeed, all the courage, the sacrifice and the endurance of the friends of peace would be at naught.

Let us, therefore, pray for harmony and its continuance, but let us also pray for something else—that the foreign policies of these three great countries will march together.

We have at the moment little official knowledge of what they are, except, of course, to assist our fighting men in their great task. But when that task is completed all our hopes for a better, safer, happier and fairer world depend on harmony of decision and of effort in our foreign affairs.

That a World International Order will be evolved appears to have been decided and the details are to be worked out at San Francisco next month.

I hope the plans are well advanced and that the 25th of April, 1945, may not find us as the 11th of November, 1918, found us—unprepared.

And here I will, no doubt, cross swords with many of my readers: I do not believe in an international police force to implement the decisions of the World Council. I take that attitude for one very simple reason—human nature—a very intractable virtue, vice, or emotion, whatever you like to call it.

During all the war years we have been inculcating the virtues of nationalism, patriotism, love of country, into the minds of our allied peoples.

Stalin was amongst the first to recognise that it would be difficult to induce the development of a fighting spirit in an international brotherhood.

Therefore I contend that having developed a faith in national sovereignty it will be impossible in our time to persuade nations to yield up that sovereignty, or even part of it to the extent of risking their own nationals being used by an international body to destroy their own people.

If my argument is valid what is the alternative? I would suggest Regional Associations of those nations having common interests, common dangers and common ideals, but all to be guided by a supreme body (very limited in numbers) representing those nations who won the war and so made peace and freedom possible for all. But, and this is important, for many generations to come, strength will have to lie in the hands of those who have in this war effectively wielded it.

But this subject is too vast for the space at my disposal and so I leave my readers to elaborate in their own minds the final picture of the future world that both they and I would seek to draw.

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XII.

by Lieut.-Col. SIR GEORGE SCHUSTER, K.C.S.I., M.P.

1. *The general prospects for international co-operation and democratic advance on the basis of the Crimea decisions.*

THE outstanding reality which overshadows everything else is that there is no chance for peaceful progress in the next chapter of human history unless Russia, the United States and the British Commonwealth can work together. Without this, no measures for weakening Germany, no machinery for wider international collaboration, will have any effective force. If there is to be such collaboration there must be give and take between the three parties. The results of the Crimea Conference represent this kind of give and take and are of priceless value.

We must appreciate the realities of the times in which we live. These three great States have *power* in a sense never known before in history. Modern war must be supported by large scale industry. Lesser powers cannot combine effectively against the greater in the same way as has been possible in the past. This, then, is a new characteristic of our times. Shall we also see something new—something for which human history can hardly give a parallel—in the manner in which this power is used? It is well to reflect on history. There runs through my mind an illuminating passage from Lord Acton.

> This law of the modern world that power tends to expand indefinitely and will transcend all barriers abroad and at home until met by superior forces produces the rhythmic movement of history. Neither race nor religion nor political theory has been in the same degree an incentive to the perpetuation of universal enmity and national strife.

I believe Lord Acton's interpretation of history is right, and the question we have to ask is whether this expanding tendency of "power" is now to cease. We can, I believe, claim that British power since Waterloo has not been used in this aggressive way. I believe also that this conception of the use of power is foreign to the whole spirit of the United States. What, then, of Russia? I can only answer that I have faith in Russia, that I cherish the belief that Russia will want peace so that she may continue within her own vast boundaries and with her own vast resources the development of a good life for her own people.

Therefore I am optimistic; but it would be folly to ignore that there will be many possible occasions for friction and misunderstanding between the three Powers—with the United States in economic matters and with Russia possibly over political issues or her relations with adjoining small nations. If these potential causes are not to lead to war, there will be a continuing need for give and take, for sympathy and above all, for an appreciation of the fact that the world is now *one*, and that the prosperity of each depends on the prosperity of all. I believe that our best hope for fruitful co-operation lies in the creation of an enlightened public opinion in all countries and in friendly contact between the *peoples* of all countries. The humble rank and file of the people will never want to make war.

2. *The political conclusions to be drawn for this country, with a view to organising the broadest unity of support for the policies envisaged in these decisions.*

In the collaboration to which I have referred above I believe that the British Commonwealth has a special characteristic contribution of its own to make, without which the democratic progress of mankind may be in

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danger. We cannot make this contribution unless we are strong. The urgent problem for our own country is how to make a success of our own society and our own civilisation. A necessary prerequisite to this is that we should handle our economic policy rightly and achieve a high standard of efficiency in the processes of production and commerce. Material comfort is not an end in itself; but it is a necessary prerequisite since, unless we can produce security of employment, higher standards of living, including, above all, good homes for happy families and a generous system of education, we shall fail in all our purposes. In order to succeed we must have co-operation between all classes, skilled leadership, honest work and a fair division of the proceeds. There are differences between the political parties as to which is the best system for attaining these ends; but, from a practical point of view, it seems to me that all parties at present agree that we shall get into confusion if we try to make revolutionary changes in our system during the years immediately following the war. It is vital that we should handle our problems rightly during these years when we shall be clearing up the mess after the war so that we may have a chance to get on the fair way of progress when conditions are more normal. When that stage is reached political parties can with less danger dispute about the ultimate system; but until then I want to see the minimum of internal conflict and the maximum of co-operation. I want to see political leaders getting down to the study of the practical steps that must be taken during the next five years and not diverting their energies by controversies over abstract principles or losing their clear vision in clouds of theory.

XIII.

by ALEXANDER SLOAN, M.P.

THE decisions of the Crimea Conference are of extreme importance to all the peoples of the world.

They are of vital significance for world peace.

It can surely be said that for the first time in world history has it been possible for three of the greatest powers in existence to meet round a common table and thrash out the various problems that confront them, and in this single action we see opportunities of closer relations with each other than ever before.

It may, of course, be said that greements such as were made at 'ta can be broken. They can, but 'f the unity of the peoples affected ken and it is the duty of the lass in all countries to see shall not be so.

That postulates that the working-class of this country should seriously re-examine their position and discover in what way we can strengthen our movement.

There must be unity in our ranks.

The war is in its last phase—many of the political difficulties, as well as military ones, have been overcome.

The settlement of the Polish question on a fair and equitable basis has given cause for quiet confidence. This nation that has been under domination for centuries can now settle down to a period of peace and quietude when she will be able to work out her own political and economic salvation.

The agreement (reached at Yalta, but announced later) on voting in the Security Council is to be welcomed as sound and practical. Power and re-

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sponsibility are linked and the unity of the great powers is seen as the real basis for the world peace organisation, and the essential foundation for the protection of the rights and interests of the smaller nations.

We should look forward to the San Francisco Conference with hope and confidence, with the assurance that democracy will emerge stronger and more secure—and that the tremendous sacrifices that have been made, the tears and blood that have been shed, will not have been in vain and that Hitler may, after all, have been right when he postulated a 1,000 years' peace in Europe.

XIV.

by D. N. PRITT, K.C., M.P.

THE first point that appeals to me when I consider the general prospects for international co-operation and democratic advance on the basis of Crimea is the steady progress that has been made in building up the friendship of the three Great Powers to a degree that could scarcely have been dreamt of three years ago. As each stage of the building represents a solution of more problems, a victory over more difficulties, a widening of the field of agreement and a narrowing of the area of doubts and differences, the prospects are surely that subsequent conferences will represent as remarkable a development of Crimea as Crimea is of Teheran—a pleasant contrast to the long series of total or almost total failures of the international conferences between the wars. We see already the possibility of really lasting peace, if we are vigilant in fighting and neutralising the opposition to Crimea and the propaganda for a soft peace with Germany.

Democratic advance is plainly of the essence of this international co-operation. Democracy is the only basis on which the three Great Powers—and the anti-fascist world generally—can meet and agree. Under the stress of a world war against fascism and in the light of the largely uniform movement in all the liberated countries towards a democratic front, having (like the United Nations, as Mr. Seymour Cocks pointed out in the House of Commons) a Communist core, but wide enough to embrace every non-fascist group or section, democracy has gained at once a far greater strength and a truer meaning; it can no longer be used as a slogan to split the working-class movement or to encourage anti-Soviet activities, for it embraces the whole movement and rests largely on Soviet strength.

The political conclusions which we can draw for our own country are, I think, two. The first is that to maintain and strengthen the Crimea agreement we must expose and defeat the vicious or foolish elements which from Right or Left oppose or carp at that agreement, and make the whole country realise that any such opposition is not merely anti-Sovietism in a new guise, but is—if and in so far as it makes headway—a direct and deadly peril to the foundation of the world's hopes of peace.

The second conclusion is that we cannot hope to carry out that task properly if we do not achieve agreement and unity at home. For the maintenance of Crimea and for victory at the next election—on which victory will depend lasting friendship between the three Great Powers and the consequent stability of the peace—we must unite at the very least the whole labour movement on a broad basis of agreement and present in Britain, a elsewhere in Europe, a single wide a powerful anti-fascist front.

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Who is to plan our Post-War Industries ?

by MARGOT HEINEMANN

THE plans of the City for the future of British industry are gradually being unfolded. On January 23, Sir John Anderson told the House of Commons of his joy in being "informed" by the Governor of the Bank of England that "discussions . . . have been taking place amongst the banking and financial communities on the financial needs of industry in the post-war period." As a result, two new finance corporations are to be set up. The larger, the Finance Corporation for Industry, Ltd., is intended to have a capital of £25 millions and borrowing powers of £100 millions; the share capital is to be subscribed in about equal quantities by consortiums of the insurance companies and investment trusts on the one hand and the Bank of England on the other; and the loan capital by the "big five" and the other clearing banks and the Scottish banks. The purpose of this company will be to provide finance for industrial businesses "with a view to their quick rehabilitation and development in the national interest." The company's prime purpose will be to provide finance and not itself to reorganise industry; but it will have control over the way the money is used. The smaller company, the Industrial and Commercial Finance Corporation, Ltd., with a capital of £15 millions and borrowing powers of £30 millions (both subscribed by the banks) has as its purpose to provide medium and long-term capital for small and medium-sized businesses (say sums of £5,000 to £200,000) whose needs would not be large enough to justify a public issue. Both will be commercial corporations without any responsibility to the Government or to Parliament.

The counterpart to this from the industrial end is the plan for the mining industry put forward by Mr. Foot, the new (ex Gas Light and Coke) chairman of the Mining Association. Coal, of all industries, is the one where radical overhaul and modernisation is most urgently needed, and where very wide sections of opinion hold that State ownership and finance will be required to carry the job through. Even the *Colliery Guardian* has expressed the view that State funds will be required and therefore presumably some State control must be accepted. Mr. Foot now puts forward, as an alternative, the reorganisation of the mining industry under a Central Coal Board, composed of mine-owning and management interests, with powers to stiffen existing price and output regulation on the one hand, and to plan modernisation and wiping out of inefficient pits on the other. All colliery companies should voluntarily bind themselves to accept the Board's decision. Without committing himself to any exact figure of the new investment needed, he quotes estimates of £150-£300 millions; and he assumes that money on this scale can be raised, if not by the individual undertakings, then by the Coal Board raising loans and capital on the credit of the industry as a whole! It appears that, rightly or wrongly. Mr. Foot believes his scheme to be the kind of thing the F.C.I. or existing City institutions will be prepared to finance.

There can be no doubt that Britain can, and must, afford to re-equip industry on a grand scale. The one thing we cannot afford is to go back to an era of idle men and machines and to accept a low level of technical efficiency which must keep down the national standard of life.

The amount of capital re-equipment and modernisation needed in the transition to a peace economy of full

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employment has been estimated (at 1938 prices) at £950 millions "piled up demand" (deferred replacements of plant, etc.) and £1,100 millions additional investment needed for modernisation and extra equipment to achieve full employment—a total of over £2,000 million at 1938 prices, or £2,800 million at likely post-war prices (M. Kalecki, *Oxford Bulletin of Statistics*, December 4, 1944) to be provided within six years or so of the war ending. And these figures certainly do not err on the high side.

The mining industry alone has been reckoned by a mineowner, Col. C. G. Lancaster, to require £150-£300 millions worth of capital re-equipment immediately (*The Times*, October 5, 1944). The steel industry, according to the President of their own highly restrictive trade association, will need £150 millions (*The Times*, October 2, 1944). The Central Electricity Board must spend £90 millions on extensions to the grid only to meet the estimated demand for current up to the end of 1948. The huge needs of the cotton industry have been strikingly brought home by the revelations of inefficiency in the recent Platt Mission Report; it is certain that the £70 millions worth of new machinery which the firms had already made plans to instal over five years will be a drop in the ocean of obsolescence. The railways are, by the companies' own statement, committed to a big programme of new and better rolling stock, of improved tracks and replanning of stations: they had accumulated £92 millions for deferred renewals up to 1944 with which to start the job. A real forward technical policy here, however, would cost far more. It is worth noting that the Weir Committee in 1930 estimated the capital cost of complete railway electrification at £260 millions. Finally, it may be noted that a leading farming expert, Mr. R. McG. Carslaw, estimates the additional capital requirements of an efficient agriculture alone at £1,000 millions. And these examples cover only a few of the major productive industries.

The task is a big one, but there is no need for dismay. The productive resources and the reserves of skilled and adaptable workers are fully large enough to enable the job to be tackled — provided they are fully and efficiently employed.

It is reliably estimated that the unemployed manpower resources of Britain in 1938, if fully employed, would have added another £500 million a year to the national income.* The economist, N. Kaldor, has shown that even by 1948, given full employment, if it were desired to invest heavily in industry, in a great housing programme and in reconstruction of Europe, civilian consumption could be raised 6 per cent. above pre-war, while doubling the pre-war rate of (gross) investment.

The problem is not whether the productive resources exist to tackle the job, but whether they will be planned and mobilised to do it. And this depends on how reconstruction is financed and by whom it is controlled.

The war has put a stopper on most plant replacement and new investment, while at the same time profits have soared (to 84 per cent. above pre-war, before tax); and this has left capitalist companies and individual capitalists with very large accumulations of profit to invest (mainly held in the form of Government debt). The increase in undistributed company profits over the war period has been of the order of £200 million a year, and the increase in all private savings totals some £7,000 million, which (allowing for some £1,500 millions of "small" savings) is large even in rela-

* A figure of "over £1,000 million" for immediate modernisation has recently been quoted by both *The Times* and the *Financial News*.

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tion to the figures of equipment needs. The trouble is that the large liquid reserves are not necessarily in the industries which most painfully need radical re-equipment or expansion. Breweries, food processing companies, tobacco companies and so on have more to spend than industries like coal or textiles, and these last, just because of their technical obsolescence, are specially unattractive to unattached capital seeking a profitable home.

Hence, any scheme for securing serious large-scale re-equipment of basic industry must do two things. It must provide cheap finance where required for the industries whose modernisation is urgent in the national interest, with suitable control over its spending to ensure that the industry really does use the money to the best advantage. Further, it must establish a system of broad priorities over the whole field of investment, so that the urgent schemes—whether for modernisation of coal or cotton, or the provision of transport and electricity for a former distressed area—do not have to compete for scarce equipment and materials with get-rich-quick developments financed by the wealthier combines out of their reserves. Otherwise the key developments will at best be only partially carried through. There will be an unorganised scramble for capital goods to meet pent-up demand, and after a year or two a crash in the heavy industries which would be disastrous to the whole economy. The experience of 1921 is not to be forgotten.

How far does the proposed F.C.I. meet the need? In so far as it means directing *some* part of the banks' free assets to large-scale modernisation schemes, it is better than nothing—but not very much better. In the first place, the sums involved are relatively small (£170 million in all, as against over £1,000 million which the "big five" banks alone seek to invest) in comparison with the task and the total capital available.

Secondly, the project means that reconstruction finance will be unnecessarily expensive. The *Financial News* (January 24, 1945) suggests that the F.C.I. will be able, "given its high credit standing," to lend at rates in the neighbourhood of 4 per cent.* But the Government, with its even higher credit standing, has been able to finance the entire war by borrowing at an average interest rate of 2.3 per cent. and much of it at 2 per cent. or under. The difference between the two rates, on an investment of £300 million for the mines alone, would be £6 millions a year—half the present ascertained profit from mining proper and over six times the present expenditure on miners' welfare.

But by far the most serious objection is that the plan leaves reconstruction (or a substantial part of it) to the control of the financial and rentier interests, without the Government or the nation having any control at all over plans and priorities. True, the F.C.I. is to have an industrial *advisory* panel, with representatives from the management and the labour side of industry. But the directors, the men who decide where the money is to go and what security is to be given, will be business men (with a scientist added for good measure) responsible solely to the financiers. Sir John Anderson has made it quite clear that, though he is "glad to be informed" of the developments, the Government has no official standing at all in relation to these bodies.

* The finance for this purpose will, of course, be lent them by the banks at a lower rate. As the *Financial News* says:

"The new institution should be able to cover its expenses and a modest dividend by charging only a small "turn" on the resources borrowed from the banks. With borrowing powers of forty times its paid-up capital, a turn of only 1 per cent. would provide the equivalent of 40 per cent. on the equity."

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Before betting on the likely policy of such institutions, it is worth examining the form shown by the banks in the past as reorganisers of industry. The Bankers' Industrial Development Company and the Securities Management Trust, formed in 1930 under the leadership of the Bank of England with capital subscribed by the main banks, set out to finance approved schemes of reorganisation in industry. The results are well remembered in Motherwell, Bolton and Jarrow.

The schemes of reorganisation sponsored by these bodies all added up to one recipe—scrapping of productive capacity considered "redundant," a drive to fix higher prices, restoration of profit at the expense of the worker and the consumer. For example, in shipbuilding, National Shipbuilders' Securities was formed to close down shipyards so as to restore profits to the remainder; one-third of British shipbuilding capacity had been so closed by 1939, and many of the skilled workers had been lost with it; there had been no appreciable modernisation of the remaining yards. In steel, the banks' big intervention after 1930 was followed by the formation of a tight and restrictive monopoly under an independent ex-Bank of England chairman (Sir Andrew Duncan), and the boosting of British steel prices (sheltered behind a tariff after 1932) to the highest levels in the world. Even the inefficient plants made good profits, but all-round technical reorganisation (promised as the price of the tariff) was not forthcoming. The Lancashire Cotton Corporation, financed through the Bank of England, had bought up and scrapped over 5 million spindles by 1939; but after more than 10 years of its activities, there had been little re-equipment with the latest machinery and the U.S. spinner in the corresponding section of the industry produced, because of better machinery, well over half as much again per hour as the Lancashire worker.

The banks and insurance companies by their very nature are the guardians of the rentier's pound of flesh. They are the last people who can be expected of their own accord to cut the "dead wood" out of an industry—except at a prohibitive price in compensation for obsolete capital.

The Foot coal plan is right up the rentiers' street. No state control. Much talk of reorganisation, of "wiping out inefficient pits," and so on; but no compulsory amalgamations except in dire emergency; and, as a prime objective, a fair return on all the capital, old and new, in this neglected and wastefully-capitalised industry. To achieve this, the old device of high-price fixing (through a strengthened cartel) and levies on production. To deal with any opposition by the miners, the restoration of "full discipline" (the right to sack, now withheld under the E.W.O.) to colliery managers.

Indeed, so plainly is all this written on the face of the Foot plan that the more far-sighted business and industrial circles are expressing very grave doubts about it.*

. . . . It is difficult to resist the conclusion that Mr. Foot's scheme would result in almost precisely the present state of affairs. There would be no effective movement towards closer integration—for at this time of day it is simply impossible to believe that voluntary methods plus an appeal to the Coal Commission will achieve anything. There would be no drastic re-equipment—because the capital does not exist within the industry and cannot be raised on market terms. There would be no improvement in the labour position—because the men would regard the scheme as reactionary. All that would exist would be a certain amount of subsidising poor pits, the subsidy to be derived in part from the good pits, but mainly from the consumer by means of a monopolistic selling organisation. This would differ from the present state of affairs only by the fact that it would be operated

* See also the comments of *The Times* (23.1.44) and *Financial News* (23.1.44).

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entirely by the mine-owners without any Government control. . . .

The Economist, January 27, 1945.)

The Crimea Conference gives a new prospect that national planning can and must be seriously begun in the capitalist democracies. If there will be section and rentier interests of all kinds who will oppose, there will also be many—both among the smaller business men and the larger industrialists—who will see their interests better served by such a policy than by a repetition of 1921 and the ensuing years.

The essential thing for the reconstruction of industry is planned and orderly control of *all* major investment, which is closely related to plans for increasing living standards. The 1944 Trades Union Congress, in its Interim Report on Industrial Reconstruction, has made a number of practical suggestions for a scheme of investment control. In principle, the same idea is acceptable to the Labour Party, the Communist Party and (with variants) the Liberals. From these the following points would arise:—

(1) National planning of investment, beginning with a report on the most urgent production targets and the capital expenditure and projects of private firms and public authorities. On this basis a rough "man-power" budget can be constructed, as a guide to the total volume of investment and consumption and the priorities that will be needed.

(2) Control of investment in accordance with this plan. During the "transition period," at least, this can be effected largely by licences on raw materials and machinery. A barrier on large transfers of Government debt, except for approved purposes, might also be a useful technique for controlling use of company reserves.

(3) Schemes which have high-priority in the national interest, and which cannot be financed by the industry itself, should be financed at the cheap rates which the Government itself (or the National Investment Board as its agent) could command. Bank lending policy should be directed accordingly. Government control of these schemes should go along with Government financial assistance.

(4) Any special corporations (such as the new F.C.I.) should operate under the supervision and control of the State body controlling investment.

(5) Control of the rate of interest at a low level by Government action.

A Little Spring-cleaning

by QUAESTOR

THE American Federation of Labour was not represented at the World Trade Union Conference, as the reader may know. But its leaders' point of view was not left without champions in London. Suitably enough, they were found on the editorial staff of the *Economist*—that venerable organ of Liberalism in the economic and business world, with a circulation of over 50,000 weekly. An article discussing the Conference, in the issue of February 24, had this to say about the Soviet trade union movement:

In the Soviet Union the trade unions are, and always have been, a limb of the State. Their membership is 100 per cent. of the working population, and not, as in Britain, less than 50 per cent. There is no collective bargaining with employers, for the State is the only employer, and the

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unions undertake a great many social insurance and welfare functions which would normally be performed by the Government in other countries. The divergence between the two types of trade unionism was never more clearly shown than in the Conference's discussion on the International Labour Office. The British pointed out that the ILO was the most effective (indeed the only effective) international platform for Labour. The Russians objected, because they do not belong to the ILO, whose tripartite constitution makes their position very difficult.

Not a sentence in this tirade but contains—or insinuates—a distortion of truth that is really astonishing after twenty-seven years' existence of the Soviet Union and nearly four years of Anglo-Soviet Alliance.

The Soviet trade unions are not, and never have been, "a limb of the State," if that curiously ambiguous phrase means to imply "a part of the State," or "organically connected with the State machine," or "subordinated to the State," or "a weapon/tool of the State." They are voluntary associations of wage-earners in a Socialist State of workers and peasants. The right of Soviet citizens to form trade unions is guaranteed by article 126 of the Soviet Constitution, and a whole chapter of the Soviet Labour Code is devoted to guarantees of the rights and privileges of the trade unions, backed up by the Criminal Code. But nowhere and in no sense do Soviet trade unions appear as "a limb of the State"—and they are not even under an obligation to register with the State, in order to gain recognition.

As Lenin explained so long ago as 1921, the Soviet trade unions are not a State organisation and not a compulsory organisation, but a means whereby the masses of the people learn to run Communist society—"a school of association, a school of solidarity, a school of defence of their own interests, a school of management, a school of administration." Obviously these functions are far wider than (*not* "divergent from") those of trade unions in countries where capitalism still exists. But the General Council of the Trades Union Congress pointed this out exactly twenty years before the *Economist*, in its 1925 report on Soviet Russia—adding, however, the explanation which the *Economist* conveniently forgets to give:—

> Being largely freed from their main function elsewhere of protecting the workers against exploitation by the wealthy, and of preventing the public service of the workers from being prejudiced for private profit, the trade unions have been able to engage in educating the workers as citizens and rulers.

The other assertions of the *Economist* are equally groundless.

The Soviet trade union membership is not 100 per cent. of the working population. The Soviet delegates at the World Trade Union Conference represented 27,500,000 members—about 80 per cent. of Soviet *wage-earners* (who themselves do not include the collective farmers, about 56 per cent. of the *working population*). We have the testimony of Soviet trade union reports that, on January 1, 1941, the Donetz Miners' Union embraced 76.9 per cent. of eligible wage-earners: the Southern Iron Ore Miners 72.3 per cent.: the Medium Engineering Workers' Union 85 per cent. and the Heavy Engineering Workers 87 per cent. An article in *Trud* (the Soviet T.U.C. newspaper) on July 14, 1943, showed the Chemical Workers as 66 per cent. organised, the Automobile Workers as 68.6 per cent. organised and the Woollen Workers 76.9 per cent.

The Soviet trade unionists are not proud of not being fully organised: on the contrary, they make it a subject of self-criticism. But these figures show that membership is not compulsory, and they knock the bottom out of the *Economist's* insinuation about limbs of

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the State with 100 per cent. membership.

There *is* collective bargaining by the trade unions, even though it be not with private employers. In the State Planning Commission, the trade unions are represented, and negotiate about basic minimum wages, estimates for the total wages funds of the various industries, and other relevant matters. At the next lower stage—the People's Commissariats governing particular industries—the trade unions (*a*) negotiate about the estimates just mentioned *before* they go to the State Planning Commission; (*b*) negotiate in detail about wage and working conditions for the industry concerned, *after* the State Planning Commission has made its decisions. In peacetime they sign national collective agreements embodying the results of these negotiations, either with the People's Commissariat (Ministry) concerned or with the group of State enterprises (known as a "State Trust") to which the conditions apply. Within this framework, the unions can, and often do, conclude regional agreements. And collective bargaining on a factory level—between the District Committee or Works Committee and the factory management—goes on constantly.

In talking about the management of social insurance by the Soviet trade unions, as opposed to management by the Government elsewhere, the *Economist* forgets to mention that in the U.S.S.R. also it was managed by a Government department, the People's Commissariat for Labour, for many years (very much under trade union control)—until in 1933 the department was abolished and the trade unions took over full control (with management of social insurance funds in each factory by an elected committee of the workers). But this did not mean that the trade unions became a limb of the State: rather the reverse. As the late John Jagger, president of N.U.D.A.W., no Communist, but an observant visitor to the U.S.S.R. on several occasions, was fond of saying: "In Russia they haven't governmentalised the trade unions; if anything, they've trade-unionised the Government."

And the *Economist* is completely off the mark, even in its references to the I.L.O. For one thing, the question of the latter's effectiveness or otherwise as an "international platform for labour" was never debated at the World Trade Union Conference. Kuznetsov and Tarasov, replying to Schevenels' and Arthur Deakin's remarks in this connection, refused to discuss the subject. As they explained, the question of the Soviet trade unions being members or non-members of the I.L.O. was a political question—arising from the fact that the League of Nations in December, 1939, had expelled the U.S.S.R. and the I.L.O. had followed the lead of its parent body in February, 1940—rather than a trade union question.

The tripartite constitution (Government, employers, workers) of the I.L.O. never figured in the Conference discussion at all; and for a very good reason. At the 1937 International Labour Conference the U.S.S.R. was represented in Geneva by delegates of its Government, its employing organisations and its trade unions. Moreover, on April 25, 1944, *Izvestia* published an editorial stating the conditions on which the U.S.S.R. (including its trade unions) could participate in an improved I.L.O. The conditions were (i) separation of the I.L.O. from the League, and its becoming an organ of the United Nations; (ii) more democracy, by giving trade unions equal representation with the Governments and employers' groups combined (*not* eliminating tripartite representation); (iii) broader conferences of the member-countries to be held, in addition to

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the narrow sessions of the executive bodies of the I.L.O.

Where does the "very difficult position" of the Soviet trade unions come in?

The reference of the *Economist* to the I.L.O., like its invented information about the relationship of the Soviet trade unions with the State, their membership and their bargaining powers, seems either to have been dragged in expressly to confuse the issue: or to be founded on the most lamentable ignorance of elementary facts about the Soviet trade union movement. Neither explanation does it much credit.

Brailsford replies to Ehrenburg

(We have received the following communication from Mr. Brailsford in reply to the article by Ilya Ehrenburg criticising his book, "Our Settlement with Germany," published in THE WAR AND THE WORKING CLASS *under the title "Mr. Brailsford: Devil's Advocate" and reprinted in our issue of February,* 1945. *A copy has been forwarded to Ilya Ehrenburg. Editorial comment will be found in the "Notes of the Month" on page* 104.—ED. L.M.)

Sir,

Russian methods in controversy were always rough, but I am curious about the motive that prompted Ilya Ehrenburg to write the masterpiece of calumny in which he reviewed my "Penguin," *Our Settlement With Germany*. His Russian readers, who have no access to this book, which "might" (he says) "have been published in Berlin" (a statement omitted in the French translation), have been led to believe that a section of English Socialists entertain the monstrous opinions he ascribes to me. Is this the way to promote understanding among the parties of the Left? The same malice coloured his portrait of Leon Blum in his recent novel. This habit of mendacity and slander has too often made co-operation between Socialists and Communists difficult in the past. If I reply to an attack I could afford to disdain, it is because I hope to awaken among English Communists some disgust against these tactics.

Some of your readers know my record in facing the Nazis. I was the first English writer to publish, as a pamphlet, early in 1933, a documented exposure of the Nazi terror. I think I was the first journalist of the Left to advocate, early in 1936, a military alliance of Britain, France and Russia against Nazi Germany. I actively helped in every effort to create a united front of resistance at home. I was instrumental in raising several hundred recruits and several thousand pounds for our Spanish comrades. I was alone in the Socialist press in the spring of 1939 in advocating conscription. In 1940, while Ehrenburg was still a neutral, I published in New York a plea for America's coming into the war, which was widely discussed.

But in 1944 it seems that I turned Devil's Advocate. Ehrenburg misuses this interesting phrase. The Devil's Advocate of the Middle Ages was not, as he says, "a defender of heretics." (The French version mistranslated this passage.) He was the theologian appointed by the Church to argue against the canonisation of a saint. Ehrenburg's main charge is conveyed by the headlines of his article: "This gentleman defends Hitler and the sadists of the S.S., who buried children alive, the executioners who roasted women alive in the churches."

The passage on which he relies occurs on p. 100 of my book. It begins by registering the "horror" and "the implacable anger" with which we have

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watched the conduct of the German people under Nazi leadership. How are we to explain their "cruelty, massive, systematic and without a parallel in the records of civilised peoples"? Is it a permanent characteristic of this nation? I suggested that we might find a clue in the fact that when they fought British troops, Germans did as a rule observe the laws of war, whereas "in dealing with races they consider subhuman, the Jews and the Slavs, they flung away all restraint, exterminated harmless and helpless populations in tens and hundreds of thousands and treated human beings as if they were noxious animals. The inference is, I think, that their cruelty is not instinctive and congenital. They do not act in this way merely because they enjoy it. They are obeying a theory: they are even carrying out a duty."

In the rest of the chapter I described how the Nazis, using all the apparatus of a totalitarian State, schools, press, army and Hitler Youth, perverted the younger generation and taught it the theory of racial superiority and the duty of brutality in the struggle for mastery. With Jews to practise on, it was schooled in cruelty. I discussed the methods by which this people might be re-educated. But, as I argued throughout, the essential measures, after the defeat of the German armies and the total elimination of the Nazi party, must be a fundamental change in the class structure of German society and in the economic system that brought the Nazis to power as the tools of monopoly capital.

In this way, then, I defended the roasting of women alive in churches.

Ehrenburg has totally forgotten that the German masses were the first of Hitler's victims. His trick throughout his review is to transfer to the S.S. what I said about the German workers. These dishonesties he supports with distorted quotations. But the real difference between us is that as a Socialist I base my hopes for the future on radical changes, social and economic, in the structure of Germany and of Europe, whereas he is content to scream for punishment and revenge. Thus he ridicules my proposal that as some amends for the persecution and slaughter of the Jews, Germany should contribute to the development and irrigation of Palestine. This he calls "an outrage": "the earth," he tells us, "cries out" not for "water in Palestine but for the blood" of the criminals. Is it barbarism that inspires this nauseating rhetoric, or shall we be charitable and dismiss it as mere childishness? Water means prosperity and safety for several million Jews. What good will blood do them?

To punishment in the sense of retaliation I have always been opposed. Socialism is a scientific doctrine, which tries to ascertain the causes that dispose to crime. Its aim is to change the social and economic environment of the criminal. It will try, if possible, to re-educate him: it may have to place him where he can do no harm, but it does not inflict suffering for the sake of vengeance. Some years ago I attended trials of ordinary offenders in Moscow and was impressed by the humanity and consistency with which these principles were carried out. I can find no trace of this Socialist thinking in Ehrenburg's attitude to the German problem.

My chief concern, then, was to render the Nazis harmless for the future. I proposed that all the leaders and officials of the Party be interned for life on some remote island and that all its members be disfranchised and disqualified from holding any public office. I argued that the conspicuous military criminals be picked out, tried and shot as promptly as possible. "We cannot go on shooting our former enemies long after hositilities have ceased. That is what Franco did to the disgust of us all." I pointed out that

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the number of Germans guilty, in one degree or another, of war-crimes, may run into hundreds of thousands. "We do not want a blood-bath. If it were to rain brimstone from Heaven upon these wicked men, the earth next day would be a happier habitation for us all. But we cannot achieve that result with machine guns. If we were to do it, those who carried out and ordered or permitted the massacre would be for the rest of their lives the worse for what they had done." Ehrenburg accordingly accuses me of "a tenderness for fascism." The answer to that lie is simple. Our purpose in this war is to make an end of Nazi cruelty and not to imitate it.

Finally, I dislike any plans for rebuilding the devastated areas of Russia with slave labour, as the International Trade Union Conference also did. In their place I prescribed the ample use, for that purpose, of German industrial resources and labour under free conditions.

Ehrenburg chose in this review to ignore all the positive proposals for the reorganisation of Germany and Europe that filled the greater part of my book. Socialists have their chance to devise a creative rather than a punitive settlement. The key to it should be the creation on democratic lines of an Economic Council, which can plan on a continental scale first the rebuilding of the ruins and then the organisation of an economy of plenty. Within its scheme it must include the enemy as well as the allied peoples, for Europe cannot be healthy, if its centre becomes a slum. But I see little hope for a constructive peace unless Communists and Socialists can manage to work together. Fascism triumphed before the war largely because of the feud that divided us. The methods of calumny in which Ehrenburg excels are the surest way to perpetuate it.

H. N. BRAILSFORD.

Book Review

Shorter Notice

Soviet Russia and the Baltic Republics by Philip Farr (Russia Today, 52 pp., 1s6d).

IF THE twenty years' attitude of the British press towards the U.S.S.R. was described as "a record in mendacity," then how to describe the decaying compost of lies about the Soviet Republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Lies still being repeated, lies given countenance by the indefensible retention on the Foreign Office list of the fascist embassies from the former fascist governments of these countries. These lies held a field for many years (despite the boastful revelations of some of the truth in German and other memoirs and documents) until Sir Stephen Tallents during this war published his autobiographical record of what he and Colonel (now Field-Marshal) Alexander and other British officials had been responsible for in these Republics at the end of the last war.

Now here the whole dirty business has been revealed by Philip Farr, who knows no Russian and has used documents and admissions almost entirely from anti-Soviet sources. From them we learn that thrice the Ests set up their own Soviet Government, thrice they were suppressed by armed intervention. Now for the fourth time it is Soviet Estonia.

Teachers and adult education lecturers might well use this booklet, not only for the facts, but in order to let their pupils understand how fascists and reactionaries can poison the wells of history. Indeed, those of them who have been gulled into transmitting poison to their pupils will feel obliged to do this.

But in the last chapter the author, dependent entirely upon non-Russian sources, is so desperately anxious never to stray beyond the documented facts available to him, that (in the reviewer's opinion) he does less than justice to the popular landslide which brought the Ests, Letts and Lithuanians into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. This notwithstanding, Philip Farr's booklet is the best thing on Baltic history since Pritt's Penguin of January, 1940.

R.P.A.

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(*Continued from page ii. of cover*)

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